Serial No.: 09/991,911
Art Unit: 2624
November 26, 2001

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph at page 17, lines 6 to 10 with the following paragraph:

The above four images are referred to as subimages hereinafter. When $\min_{x \le i \le x+1}$ and $\max_{x \le i \le x+1}$ are abbreviated to α and β respectively, the subimages can be expressed as follows:

$$p^{(m,0)} = \alpha(x)\alpha(y)\, p^{(m+1,0)}$$

$$p^{(m,1)} = \alpha(x)\beta(y)\, p^{(m+1,1)}$$

$$p^{(m,2)} = \beta(x)\alpha(y)\, p^{(m+1,2)}$$

$$p^{(m,[[2]]3)} = \beta(x)\alpha(y)\, p^{(m+1,3)}$$

Please replace the paragraph at page 25, lines 12 to 19 with the following paragraph.

The total energy of the mapping, that is, a combined evaluation equation which relates to the combination of a plurality of evaluations, is defined as $\lambda C_f^{(m,s)} + D_f^{(m,s)}$ where $\lambda[[\bullet]] \geqq 0$ is a real number. The goal is to detect a state in which the combined evaluation equation has an extreme value, namely, to find a mapping which gives the minimum energy expressed by the following:

$$\min_f \{\lambda C_f^{(m,s)} + D_f^{(m,s)}\} \quad \text{--- (14)}$$